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IN MEMORY OF

Agnes Stanford Taylor

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LOS ANGELES

To Grandma
from Ed
January 23, 1907.

Ed

Men's tears are many, but in them
do rest
The noblest things that stir within
his breast.



IN MEMORY OF

Agnes Stanford Taylor

WHO PASSED FROM EARTHLY
BEING ON THE MORNING OF
THE TWENTY-SEVENTH DAY
OF NOVEMBER IN THE YEAR
NINETEEN HUNDRED AND SIX

BY E. R. T.

PRINTED FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION
IN THE MONTH OF DECEMBER M CM VI

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TO A. S. T.

MY YEARS' OWN ANGEL, THOU DOST
LEAVE ME NOW;
BUT DEATH FALLS DEAD BEFORE THY
STAINLESS BROW,
FOR THOU RELIVEST IN MY HEART OF
TEARS,
TO BEAR ME UP THROUGH LIFE'S
REMAINING YEARS.

November 27, 1906

I

AT HER DEATHBED

She saw Death charging, panoplied and
grim,
Full tilt upon her, yet she looked at him
With such courageous smile, he sent a dart
Untipped with pain through her expectant
heart,
And so she fell into the arms of rest
Like a spent child upon its mother's breast.

II

NO MORE

The liquid music of her golden voice,
That made the soul with freshened thrill
rejoice,

Is silent on this earth forevermore;
Her dark-hued eyes that set my heart on
fire,

And blazed, as need was, with consuming
ire,

Give not one ray from out their once
proud store;

While her dear arms that oft around me
clung

I ne'er shall feel again, though my fond
tongue

Importunately all the powers implore.

III

BY HER COFFIN

With blossoms covered her dear body lay
 Within the coffin, folded on her breast
 Those indefatigable hands at rest,
 That strove in mastery from day to
 day.

So conquering still she seemed in loving
 way,

 With all the graces seemed she so
 possessed,

 We dared not doubt that all was for
 the best,

 Nor dared to blench before Death's
 black array.

A tinge of color faintly dyed her cheek,
 Her lips were parted as though fain to
 speak,

 While new-born beauty queened it in
 her face.

If thus her clay, what must her spirit be,
 That tried and tempered in its earthly
 race

 Triumphant enters immortality.

IV

APRIL AND NOVEMBER

That April sky, how fair it was
When she first promised to be mine;
That April sky, how bright it was
When she became forever mine.
And brighter still that April sky
Has shone with each recurring year
Upon our love's memorial day;
But nevermore for me the high
Rejoicing when that day is here;
For then November will be nigh,
And on my heart remorseless lay
Its black, appalling funeral bier.

NOT FAR

November's leaves were brown,
And boreal breezes blew
The naked branches through,
When Death's dart struck her down;
But this most precious prey
Is not for him alway:
E'en now I feel that she
Is not far off from me,
And that her spirit will
My heart all newly fill,
And lead my footsteps where
They tread celestial air.

VI

MY VISION

When I look out upon the vast of space
I see no star more glorious than her face;
In sooth, as with illimitable wings,
She seems to reach the utmost bound of
things.

VII

NOT FREE

Unshackled now the chains that her dear
 hands
Had spent the years in fashioning for me:
No more I spring to meet her fond
 demands,
How great or various whatso'er they be;
No more I bend obedient to her charms,
Nor kneel a devotee before her shrine;
No more I fold her in my loving arms,
To press her unexhausted lips to mine;
No more I feel her as my heart's own
 queen,
That dominates and splendors every
 scene; —
Mid desolation's desert I am free;
Such liberty is slavery's worst to me.

VIII

TOO LATE

Who could foretell till she was gone
How she had filled my heart and soul;
That though my feet went stoutly on
Grief's bells for me must ever toll;
That then her loveliness should seem
To mock my poor, tear-blinded sight,
As far beyond all wonder's dream
In glory shone its new-born light.

Oh, let me say it still once more,
That has been said a million times,
And has been sung in poet-lore
With multitude of sobbing rhymes;
That little does the truest know
The worth of love that's all his own,
Till swept away on waves of woe
It leaves him empty and alone.

Ah, then we feel if it should be
This precious thing again were ours,
No patient, holiest devotee
Would build for it more hallowed bowers.
Too late! Too late! that dreadful cry
All helpless rends the freezing air,
And impotent we fall, to lie
In wretchedness that tastes despair.

IX

IDLE TEARS

Weep not for me, she firmly said
When life for her was nearly sped;
And then I smiled, nor dared to know
The great, immedicable woe
That would me mine when she was dead.

But now that she away has fled,
Mine eyes in disobedience shed
The tears that unappeasing flow —
All idle tears.

Thou dear, departed one, who fed
My springs of life, and sweetly led
My footsteps from the long ago
To where Death laid thy glories low,
Forgive me, at this moment dread,
These idle tears.

AS SHE WAS

No compromise was hers, but straight she
walked

Along the shard-strown paths of Duty's way,
Clear-eyed, courageous, never weakly balked,
And filling every measure of the day.

The scorpion brood of malice did not bask
Within the chambers of her fearless breast;
For friend or enemy she wore no mask,
Nor welcomed any but her heart's true
guest.

E'en Chaucer's Prioress could learn from
her

In all the arts that delicately please,
Nor did her body's direst torture stir
Revolt against the slightest one of these.

She was not faultless, but her love
supplied

The place of lesser things to her denied.

XI

HUSHED MUSIC

She deeply touched the chords of life
As maid, as mother, and as wife,
Till music tracked along the ways
Of all her bounty-gloried days;
And we who shared the chiefest part
In her benign, exhaustless heart,
Now lonely sit, and list in vain
For that excelling, lofty strain.

XII

MY FOUNTAIN

When tossed and tumbled in the raging
 strife,
That makes so large a part of human life;
When wearied with the uneffectual pains
That brought my head and heart such
 paltry gains;
When Melancholy spread its dusky wings
Above me, and I missed the soul of things;
When weakness held me as with giant
 hand
Till all my treasure seemed at its command;
I laid my head upon her bounteous breast,
And filled my being's urn with strength
 and rest.

XIII

BODY AND SOUL

Her body was to her a sacred fane
To be kept cleansed and free from every
stain;

'Twas her religion; — yet she kept control
Of all the priceless treasures of her soul:
So tender she, to every suffering cry
She longed with healing hand and word to
fly,

Still oft lamenting that she was not strong
To slay some raging dragon of a wrong.
And hers the sense of that divine delight
Of God as Father in eternal might,
And unto Him, to crown the laboring day,—
Last act of all,— she lowly knelt to pray.

XIV

HER FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH

What inextinguishable youth was hers! —
And though disease had marked her for its
 prey,
Age could not set its seamy characters
Upon her face, nor turn one lock to gray.
Within her breast the spring still bubbled
 clear
Of sparkling humor even when death was
 near;
And when he struck her down the tender
 grace
Of smiling resignation lit her face.

IN LONELINESS

Unwonted loneliness has fallen on me:
For near two score of years to breathe
 an air
In common with my dearest, then to be
Bereft of that which gave me life, yet
 fare
Still onward empty of her love and
 care,
The myriad trinkets and the gowns to
 see
Her beauteous body nevermore can
 wear,
O'erwhelm my being in such rare
 degree,
That strange, new scenes unfold in sorrow's
 tragedy.

Father and mother, children, friends the
best,
Have been full often swept from
helpless me;
But none of these the chambers of my
breast
Had harbored for so many years as she.
Affection deep was theirs, to me most
blest;
But Love was hers, made sweetly
manifest
From day to day through fruitage of
my prime;
And now my bosom, spoiled of its dear
guest,
In lonely grief recalls the happy time
When Love's all hallowed bells harmonious
rang in chime.

XVI

REGRETS

O vain regrets, how great you seem —
Beyond what all our thought can deem —
And will not leave us to our peace,
But sting and sting without surcease;
And so I ponder o'er and o'er
If I should not have loved her more;
If I true value on her set,
And every wish in fondness met;
If her sweet words and loving looks
Were not declined too oft for books;
If this or that; — but why recount
The total of the vast amount?
All this is closed; and vain regret
Cannot discharge the solemn debt;
And so I stagger on the road
Beneath my never lightened load.

XVII

WOMAN'S LOVE

We take for granted, ah, so many things,
Some fond, unwearied heart on us
bestows,
Nor blinded see the torturing, hidden
throes
When seeming coldness her dear bosom
wring's.

Too oft the man in fatuous folly flings
Away the treasure he so little knows,
And flees the all-sufficing, soft repose,
Where every joy with healing music
sings.

O Woman's Love, what art can measure
thee,
What plummet thy vast ocean depths
can sound,
What divination thy circumference
bound?

If he who has thee in supreme degree
In thy great service be deficient found,
He should be scourged through all
eternity.

XVIII

THE QUEEN

Man fills not home as does the woman: she
Reigns there in dominance benign and free;
Her very presence fills with balm the air;
Her busy footsteps beat in music there;
And when she falls, the home falls stark
and lone,
While Emptiness usurps the vacant throne.

XIX

I DO NOT CHIDE THEE, DEATH

I do not chide thee, Death, for thou didst
save

Her tortured body many a pang, and gave
Such crowning beauty to her placid face,
She seemed already of the Angel race.

IMPOTENCE

Oh, could my weak-winged verse soar high,
To sing of her empurpled days,
Until it reached the farthest sky,
'Twould yet fall short of fitting praise:
Ah, not till now since Poesy
Her wonders to me first revealed,
And I to her then dared to be
In humbleness forever sealed,
Have I so felt my impotence
In all the cunning ways of sense;
In all the depthless wells of fire
That lie within the Poet's heart,
Obedient to the vast desire
Of his incomparable art;
And in the music on whose wings
Serenely soar the loveliest things,
That still through even the mist of tears
Bear onward with immortal years.

THESE TEARS OF POESY

These tears of Poesy, how vain they are
To tell myself and others her desert;
Oh, may I not my heart the deeper hurt
By dimming with them her resplendent star.

TO DEATH

PRAY, WHO ART THOU WHOSE HORRID
MIEN AND THREATENING SPEAR
BESPEAK UNNUMBERED VICTIMS IN
WOE-BREATHING STRIFE?—
THE AGES CALL ME DEATH; AND
SHAK'ST THOU NOT WITH FEAR?—
AH NO; THY SPEAR'S THE KEY THAT
OPES THE GATE OF LIFE.

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